

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 769

By Burks

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Mitch Baker for being elected as the 2013-2014 National FFA Secretary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those intrepid citizens who have contributed the highest levels of dedication to the organizations to which they belong, committing themselves to the tenets of volunteerism which have defined the citizens of this State; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Mitch Baker who, in fitting recognition of his dedication to the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Organization, was named as the National FFA Secretary for 2013-2014 at the 86<sup>th</sup> National FFA Convention & Expo; and

WHEREAS, each year at the National FFA Convention & Expo, six students are elected by delegates to represent the organization as a national officer; national officers commit to a year of service with the National FFA Organization, traveling over 100,000 miles in the U.S. and internationally; and

WHEREAS, the national officers visit thousands of FFA members and teachers, government and education officials, and various business and industry leaders, conducting personal growth and leadership training seminars for FFA members throughout the country and helping set policies that will guide the future of FFA by promoting agricultural literacy; and

WHEREAS, the National FFA Organization is a youth organization of 579,678 student members as part of 7,570 local FFA chapters in all fifty states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; and

WHEREAS, the FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education; and

WHEREAS, Mitch Baker embodies each of these characteristics and is a shining example of the level of excellence FFA members achieve; and

WHEREAS, Mitch Baker's father served as a former state FFA officer and instilled in him a passion for FFA, introducing him to the organization at a young age and taking him to the State FFA Convention; and

WHEREAS, the son of Phillip and Chris Baker, Mitch first joined the Upperman High School, Baxter Chapter of FFA and has maintained his membership in the organization while attending the University of Tennessee (UT) at Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, Mitch Baker has served the FFA in numerous leadership positions, including serving as regional officer and chairman of his association's state officer nominating committee and as his FFA chapter's president and reporter; he was a national finalist in the FFA Organization's prepared public speaking career development event and received a Tractor Supply Co. scholarship; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Baker most recently served as the 2012-2013 Tennessee FFA Association Secretary before being elected as the National FFA Secretary; and

WHEREAS, an agriculture communications and broadcast journalism major, Mitch Baker has committed his time and energies to a number of endeavors and organizations, including the Student Government Association, the Center of Leadership and Service at UT, Habitat for Humanity in Cookeville, Love Kitchen in Knoxville, Pond Gap Elementary in Knoxville, and Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity; and

WHEREAS, Mitch Baker epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, the importance of his role as Secretary and as an FFA member is perhaps best summarized by Mr. Baker, who stated, "I love to represent Tennessee FFA, and service has always been something that's been instilled in my life by my parents, my church, and my family. But the biggest reason that I ran for national office is a calling of mine: to take off people's life blinders and remind them just how incredible they are."; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Mitch Baker for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we applaud Mitch Baker on being named the 2013-2014 National FFA Secretary and offer our best wishes for his continued success and happiness in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.